DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 471 864 UD 035 426

AUTHOR	Rickles, Jordan; Ong, Paul M.
TITLE	Relationship between School and Residential Segregation at the Turn of the Century.
PUB DATE	2001-11-06
NOTE	16p.
AVAILABLE FROM	The Ralph and Goldy Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies, The School of Public Policy & Social Research, UCLA, 3250 Public Policy Building, Los Angeles, CA 90095. Tel: 310-206-4417; Web site: http://www.sppsr.ucla.edu/lewis/metroamerica/segl.htm.
PUB TYPE	Numerical/Quantitative Data (110) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Asian American Students; Black Students; Blacks; Elementary Education; Hispanic American Students; Hispanic Americans; Pacific Islanders; Public Schools; *Racial Segregation; *Residential Patterns; *School Segregation; Urban Areas; Urban Schools

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the relationship between school and residential segregation, noting that while these two forms of segregation are fundamentally linked, other factors cause them to diverge. The analysis focuses on segregation in 329 metropolitan areas. Data come from the 1998-99 National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data Public School Universe survey and Public Education Agency survey. Analysis of African American, Asian/Pacific Islander (API), and Hispanic racial segregation in metropolitan public primary grade schools and residential housing indicates that levels of school and residential segregation are highest for African Americans and lowest for APIs. Average school and residential segregation levels are very similar for African Americans, but for Hispanics and APIs, school segregation is greater than residential segregation. African American school segregation is higher in the U.S. Midwest. API school segregation is lower in the northeast and west. Hispanic school segregation is lower in the west. Residential segregation is the most important factor in determining level of school segregation. The level of school segregation is also influenced by metropolitan size, metropolitan per capita income, average school enrollment, and proportion of student enrollment in the metropolitan area's largest school district. Technical notes and tables are appended. (SM)

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DISCUSSION PAPER

Relationship Between School and Residential Segregation at the Turn of the Century

By Jordan Rickles and Paul M. Ong with Shannon McConville and Doug Houston

June 11, 2001

FINDINGS

An analysis of African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Hispanic racial segregation in metropolitan public primary grade schools and residential housing indicates that:

- ***Levels of school and residential segregation are highest for African Americans and lowest for Asians/Pacific Islanders.***
- ***Average school and residential segregation levels are very similar for African Americans, but for Hispanics and Asians/Pacific Islanders school segregation is greater than residential segregation.***
- ***African American school segregation is higher in the Midwest. Asian/Pacific Islander school segregation is lower in the Northeast and West, and Hispanic school segregation is lower in the West.***
- ***Residential segregation is the most important factor in determining the level of school segregation.***
- ***The level of school segregation is also influenced by metropolitan population size, metropolitan per capita income, average school enrollment, and the proportion of student enrollment in the metropolitan area's largest school district.***

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I. Introduction

Two of the most visible and undesirable manifestations of a racially divided society are school and residential segregation. The school desegregation movement, which gained momentum from the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, fought to break the connection between residential location and school enrollment by integrating public education.

Unfortunately, school and residential segregation remain tethered to each other. Worse, Orfield and Yun find a pattern of school resegregation during the 1990s (1999), despite a slight decrease in residential segregation (Lewis Center, 2001; Glaeser and Vigdor, 2001). This paper examines the relationship between school and residential segregation. While these two forms of segregation are fundamentally linked, other factors cause them to diverge from one another.

II. Methodology

This analysis focuses on segregation in 329 metropolitan areas. Segregation is measured using the Dissimilarity Index (DI). The DI indicates the percentage of one racial/ethnic group that would have to relocate (to a different school or residence) in order to be evenly distributed with Non-Hispanic Whites in the metropolitan area. The index ranges from zero to 100, with zero indicating perfect integration and 100 indicating complete segregation. For example, a score of 50 for African American school segregation means 50% of the African American student population would have to relocate to a different school to be evenly distributed with Non-Hispanic Whites in the metropolitan area. Generally, DI scores above 60 are considered to represent high segregation, while scores between 40 and 60 indicate moderate segregation and scores below 40 indicate low segregation (Glaeser and Vigdor, 2001).

To measure school segregation we utilize data from the 1998-99 National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Common Core of Data Public School Universe. We restrict our analysis of school segregation to regular, public primary grade schools as defined by the Department of Education. To measure residential segregation we utilize data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Redistricting Data. We present two types of residential segregation, the first based on the entire population (total residential segregation) and the other based on the under 18 years of age population (child residential segregation). Unless otherwise indicated, comparisons between school and residential segregation are based on child residential segregation. (For more information on the data and methodology see Appendix A.)

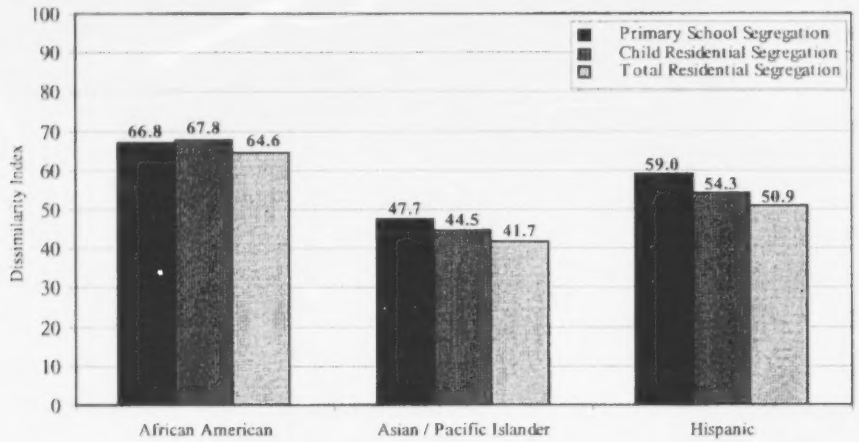
III. Levels of School and Residential Segregation

A. Segregation levels vary by race/ethnicity.

On average, African Americans face higher segregation compared to Asians/Pacific Islanders (APIs) and Hispanics. The average levels of school and residential segregation for African Americans are in the mid-60s. Hispanics and APIs face moderately high levels of segregation on average, with scores in the 50s and 40s respectively. Figure 1 displays the mean dissimilarity

scores for the three racial/ethnic groups. (See Appendix B for additional segregation summary statistics and the segregation levels for the 25 most populous metropolitan areas.)

FIGURE 1: AVERAGE SCHOOL AND RESIDENTIAL SEGREGATION LEVELS, BY RACE



Note: reported averages reflect the dissimilarity-index mean for 329 MSAs. The mean is weighted by the size of the racial group population.

The pattern for African Americans is intriguing because school segregation is on the average lower than residential segregation. Enforcement of school integration policies traditionally focused on areas with high concentrations of African Americans; consequentially it makes sense to find relatively lower school segregation for African Americans. Despite this, school segregation for African Americans is still significantly higher than for the other two racial/ethnic groups.

B. Segregation levels differ across regions.

Segregation for all three racial/ethnic groups is higher, on average, in the Midwest and Northeast than in the South and West (see Table 1). African Americans and Hispanics face the largest regional discrepancies in segregation levels, while the regional differences for APIs are less pronounced.

TABLE 1: AVERAGE SCHOOL AND RESIDENTIAL SEGREGATION, BY REGION

Segregation Type	Region			
	Midwest (n=71)	Northeast (n=60)	South (n=135)	West (n=63)
African American				
Primary School Segregation	78.8	75.4	60.6	57.9
Child Residential Segregation	77.0	77.4	62.9	57.5
Total Residential Segregation	74.8	74.0	59.0	55.7
Asian/Pacific Islander				
Primary School Segregation	52.7	50.8	46.3	46.0
Child Residential Segregation	44.7	46.9	41.2	44.7
Total Residential Segregation	41.9	44.2	39.3	41.5
Hispanic				
Primary School Segregation	66.3	69.4	53.8	57.7
Child Residential Segregation	57.7	65.6	47.4	54.4
Total Residential Segregation	53.7	60.7	45.1	51.1

Note: table reports the dissimilarity-index mean for 329 MSAs. The mean is weighted by the size of the racial group population.

In the South, where desegregation efforts were traditionally focused, and in the West, where metropolitan areas are generally more diverse, segregation for African Americans teeter between high and moderate levels (average DI scores between 56 and 63). In the Midwest and Northeast, where segregation has been more pronounced since the 1960s, African Americans confront very high levels of segregation on average (average DI scores between 74 and 79). Similarly, Hispanics in the West and South generally face moderate levels of segregation (average DI scores between 45 and 58), while Hispanics in the Midwest and Northeast confront high levels – particularly in the Northeast (average DI scores above 60). APIs generally face moderate segregation in all four regions, although the levels of segregation are slightly higher in the Midwest and Northeast.

Average discrepancies between school segregation and child residential segregation – or the relative measure of school segregation – also differ across regions. For African Americans in the Northeast and South, average school segregation is slightly lower than average residential segregation, but for those living in the Midwest and West school segregation is slightly higher than residential segregation. For APIs and Hispanics, average school segregation is higher than average residential segregation in all four regions. Relative school segregation for Hispanics is highest in the Midwest (with a 8.6 gap in the DI score) and lowest in the West (with a 3.3 gap). APIs also experience the highest level of relative school segregation in the Midwest (with a 8.0 gap) and the lowest in the West (with a 1.3 gap).

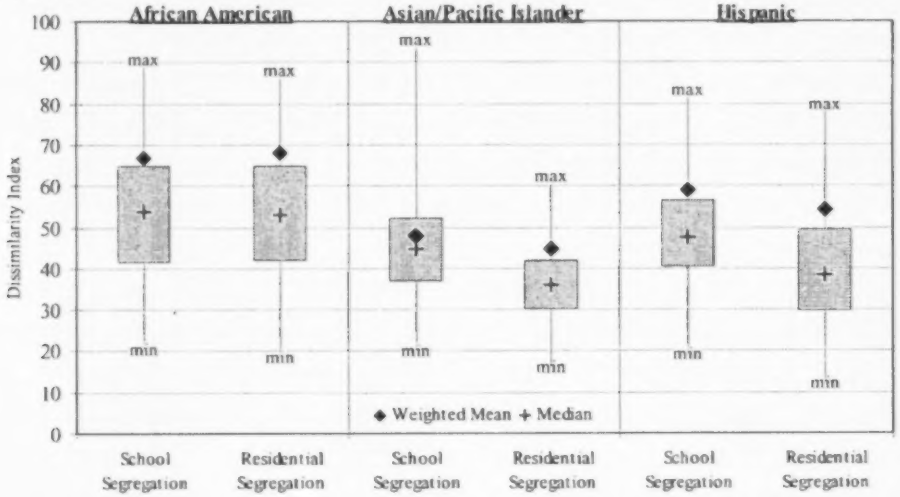
C. Segregation levels vary across metropolitan areas.

Figure 2 displays the distribution of school and child residential segregation levels across the 329 MSAs studied. The graph depicts the range between the MSA with the lowest dissimilarity index score (min) and the MSA with the highest score (max). The shaded boxes represent the

range between the 25th percentile and 75th percentile. The "+" marks the dissimilarity index where exactly half of the MSAs have segregation levels below and half have segregation levels above that point (the median or 50th percentile). The diamonds mark the weighted averages shown in Figure 1.

The statistics show considerable variation in the level of segregation across metropolitan areas, indicating that racial segregation is far from being a uniform national phenomenon. For African Americans, the distribution of segregation scores for schools is similar to the distribution for housing. For the other two groups, the distribution – along with the mean and median – is higher for school segregation than for residential segregation.

FIGURE 2: DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL AND RESIDENTIAL SEGREGATION ACROSS METROPOLITAN AREAS

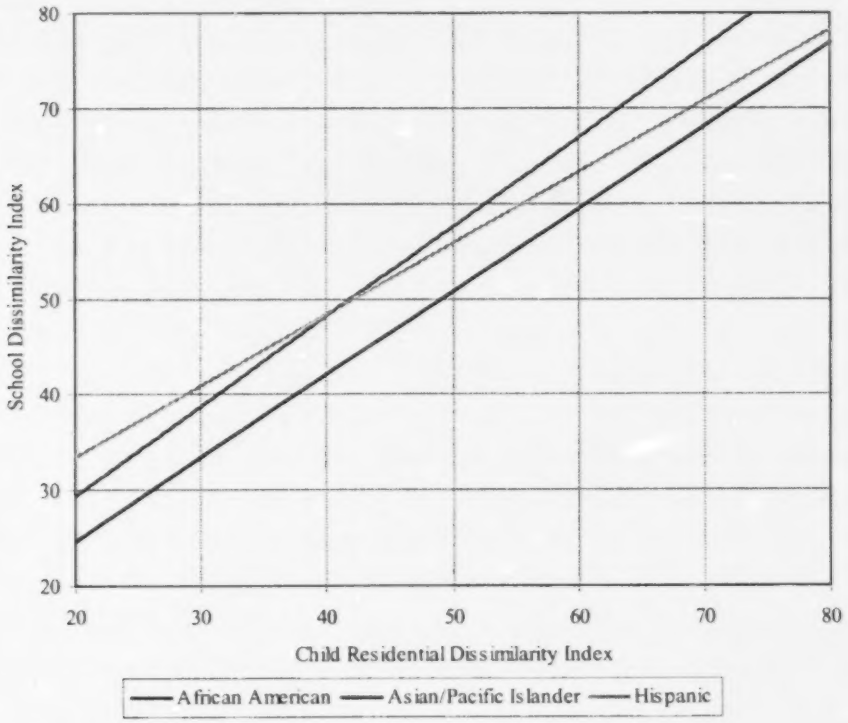


Note: each box represents the dissimilarity-index range from the 25th percentile and the 75th percentile for 329 MSAs. Residential segregation refers to child residential segregation. The mean is weighted by the size of the racial group population.

IV. Factors Related to Variation in School Segregation

The level of residential segregation within a metropolitan area is the most important factor in explaining the level of school segregation. Figure 3 graphically displays the overall relationship between residential and school segregation for African Americans, APIs, and Hispanics. For all three groups, higher residential segregation translates into higher school segregation.

Figure 3: Estimated Relationship Between Residential and School Segregation, By Race



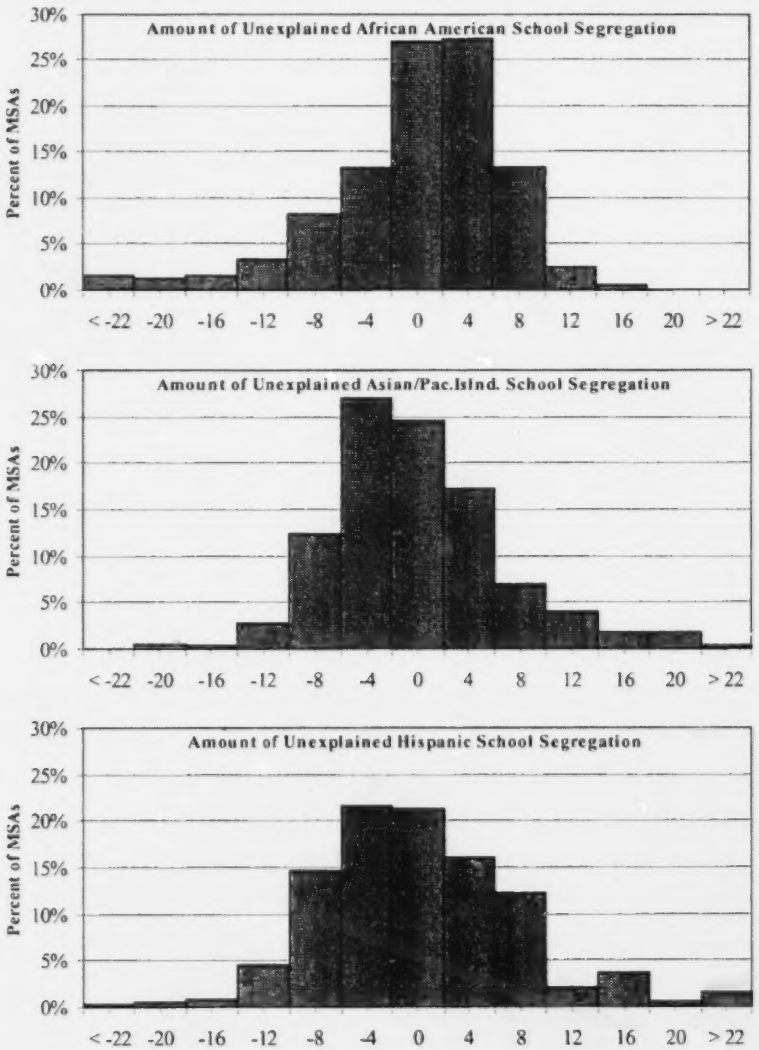
Note: the estimated relationship is calculated from a simple linear regression with school segregation as the dependent variable and child residential segregation as the independent variable. Estimates are based on 329 MSAs.

There are, however, differences across racial/ethnic groups. For APIs, school segregation is typically higher than residential segregation. The same is true for Hispanics, except in metropolitan areas with extremely high levels of residential segregation. For African Americans, school segregation generally mirrors residential segregation.

Residential segregation helps explain school segregation, but other factors also play a role. Figure 4 plots the amount of school segregation *not* explained by residential segregation (see note in figure for details). In metropolitan areas clustered around zero, school segregation is

almost entirely explained by residential segregation. For metropolitan areas with an amount below zero, school segregation is lower than expected given the level of residential segregation. For metropolitan areas with an amount above zero, school segregation is higher than expected given the level of residential segregation.

FIGURE 4: AMOUNT OF SCHOOL SEGREGATION NOT EXPLAINED BY RESIDENTIAL SEGREGATION



Note: the size of the unexplained level of school segregation is calculated by subtracting the estimated level of school segregation from the actual level of school segregation. The estimated level is calculated from a simple linear regression with school segregation as the dependent variable and child residential segregation as the independent variable. The unexplained amount is equivalent to the residual value.

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In metropolitan areas *not* clustered around zero, factors other than residential segregation play a strong role in explaining school segregation. These other factors can be classified into three broad categories: regional, metropolitan, and school/district. Table 3 summarizes each factor's relationship to school segregation (estimated using multiple regression analysis, see Appendix A for more description). Some of the findings of interest are summarized below.

Regional Factors: As described earlier, school segregation varies by region. For African Americans, school segregation is higher in the Midwest relative to the South. For APIs, school segregation is lower in the Northeast and West relative to the South. For Hispanics, school segregation is lower in the West relative to the South.

Metropolitan Characteristics: More populous metropolitan areas have higher school segregation for African Americans and Hispanics. Metropolitan areas with higher average per capita income have lower segregation for African Americans and Hispanics, suggesting "wealthier" metropolitan areas have less segregation. Metropolitan areas with more new housing built in the 1990s have lower segregation levels for APIs and Hispanics. This finding appears counterintuitive because new housing is expected to represent suburban white-flight, but this finding is consistent with other research on residential segregation.

School/District Characteristics: Metropolitan areas with higher average school enrollment have lower school segregation for all three racial/ethnic groups. This may be because larger schools are able to enroll students from wider geographic areas and thus have a more diverse student body. Metropolitan areas with a larger percentage of their student population in the largest school district have lower school segregation for African Americans and Hispanics. This finding suggests that metropolitan areas with large central school districts are better suited to implement school integration policies.

TABLE 2: FACTORS RELATED TO VARIATION IN SCHOOL SEGREGATION

Factor	Significant Relationship To School Segregation		
	African American	Asian/Pacific Islander	Hispanic
Child Residential Segregation			
Segregation of Respective Race	+++	+++	+++
Regional (relative to South) --			
Midwest	++	0	0
Northeast	0	- - -	0
West	0	- -	- - -
Metropolitan Characteristics			
Total Population	++	0	+++
Per Capita Income	- -	0	- -
Index of New Housing Permits	0	-	- - -
% Total Pop. in Military	0	- -	- - -
School/District Characteristics			
Average School Enrollment	- - -	- - -	- - -
% Student Population in Largest District	- -	0	- -
% Student Pop. of Respective Race	- - -	- - -	0

Levels of Significant Relationships:
- - - = negative relationship at a 99% significance level
- - = negative relationship at a 95% significance level
- = negative relationship at a 90% significance level
0 = no significant relationship
+ = positive relationship at a 90% significance level
++= positive relationship at a 95% significance level
+++ = positive relationship at a 99% significance level
Note: results based on OLS regression for 326 MSAs (See Appendix A for additional details).

V. Summary

This paper describes the relationship between school and residential segregation across racial/ethnic groups and across metropolitan areas. It also provides insight into the factors associated with the level of school segregation.

Segregation levels and the relationship between residential and school segregation differ across racial/ethnic groups. Segregation levels for African Americans remain high, while the level of school segregation for APIs and Hispanics is high relative to their residential segregation levels. Further research and desegregation efforts should address these racial/ethnic differences in segregation levels.

Desegregation efforts are often dismissed on the premise that school segregation cannot be decreased because it is inherently linked to residential segregation. While the two types of segregation are closely related, other factors are also associated with school segregation. This suggests there are ways to lower school segregation through governmental action.

References

Glaeser, Edward L. and Jacob L. Vigdor. 2001. "Racial Segregation in the 2000 Census: Promising News," Center on Urban & Metropolitan Policy, The Brookings Institute. Washington, DC: April 2001.

Lewis Center Census 2000 Fact Sheet, 2001. "Residential Segregation in United States Metropolitan Areas," Ralph and Goldy Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies, UCLA School of Public Policy and Social Research. Los Angeles: April 2001.

Orfield, Gary and John T. Yun, 1999. "Resegregation in American Schools," The Civil Rights Project, Harvard University. June 1999.

APPENDIX A: TECHNICAL NOTES

Data:

The analysis relies on two primary sources of data. The 1998-99 National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Common Core of Data Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey and Public Education Agency Survey provides enrollment, school, and district information. The U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Redistricting Data (P.L. 94-171) Summary File provides racial/ethnic population information.

Various other data sources were used to compile metropolitan-level information on some of the other variables examined in the analysis of school segregation. These variables are per capita income, new housing permits, and number of individuals in the military.

Unit of analysis:

The aggregate unit of analysis is the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) as defined by the Census 2000 Redistricting Data. According to the 2000 Census, there are 331 MSAs in the United States (excluding Puerto Rico). The analysis presented in this paper excludes the two MSAs in Idaho (Boise City and Pocatello) because racial breakdowns for students in Idaho schools are not reported in the available data.

The analysis also relies on two micro-level units of analysis: schools and residential neighborhoods. For schools, we only examine regular, public primary grade schools (with reported enrollment) as defined by the U.S. Department of Education. According to this definition, primary schools are those schools where the lowest instructional grade is Prekindergarten to third and the highest instructional grade is up to eighth. These schools were selected because we believe they best represent "local neighborhood schools." For residential neighborhoods, we examine census tracts (as defined by the 2000 Census) within the metropolitan areas. While other levels of geography – particularly census block groups – are sometimes used to examine residential segregation, we believe census tracts are more representative of "residential neighborhoods."

We use two techniques to determine which MSA (if any) a school is located in. For MSAs that directly correspond to county boundaries, we simply assign schools to the proper MSA based on the county they are located in. For MSAs that do not correspond to county boundaries (specifically MSAs in the New England area), we assign schools based on the postal zipcode they are located in. If the school's location address zipcode is missing from the NCES data, we either use the mailing address zipcode or the school district location address zipcode. Since zipcodes do not necessarily confine to MSA boundaries there is some margin of error in or estimation of school- and district-level information at the MSA-level.

Definition of racial/ethnic categories:

Unfortunately, the 98/99 NCES data and the 2000 Census data do not have the same racial/ethnic group definitions. As a result, we had to reclassify the racial/ethnic categories to make the two definitions as comparable as possible. Since the racial/ethnic definitions in the 2000 Census are more detailed than the NCES definitions, we chose to collapse some of the census definitions to match the NCES definitions. The NCES definitions are:

- American Indian/Alaskan Native;
- Asian/Pacific Islander;
- Black, not Hispanic;
- Hispanic; and
- White, not Hispanic.

To best match the above definitions with the 2000 Census data, we created racial/ethnic categories from the 2000 Census using the following definitions:

- Asian/Pacific Islanders includes Asians and Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders that did not indicate Hispanic origin. Also, multi-race individuals who indicated they were Asian and Native Hawaiians or Other Pacific Islander, or Asian or Native Hawaiians or Other Pacific Islander and White, and not of Hispanic origin are classified as Asian/Pacific Islanders;
- Blacks/African Americans includes people who identified themselves as Black, or White and Black, and did not indicate Hispanic origin;
- Hispanics includes all individuals who indicated they are of Hispanic origin;
- Non-Hispanic Whites include Whites that did not indicate Hispanic origin; and
- All other racial groups (including American Indians and various multi-racial combinations) are included in an "Other" group.

Definition of segregation index:

We use the Dissimilarity Index (DI) as the measure of school and residential segregation. The DI indicates the percentage of one racial/ethnic group that would have to relocate (to a different school or residence) in order to be evenly distributed with Non-Hispanic Whites in the metropolitan area. The index ranges from zero to 100, with zero indicating perfect integration and 100 indicating complete segregation. Generally, DI scores above 60 are considered to represent high segregation, while scores between 40 and 60 indicate moderate segregation and scores below 40 indicate low segregation. The index is calculated using the following equation:

$$DI = \frac{1}{2}\sum_{i=1}^{n}\left[\frac{N_{1i}}{N_1} - \frac{N_{2i}}{N_2}\right]$$

Where N_{1i} is the population of a racial/ethnic group in ith school/tract, N_{2i} is the population of Non-Hispanic Whites in ith school/tract, N_1 is the total population (or school population) of the racial/ethnic group in the MSA, and N_2 is the total population (or school population) of Non-Hispanic Whites in the MSA. Segregation between any two racial/ethnic groups can be measured using the DI; in this report Non-Hispanic Whites are always used as the common comparison group.

Three different measures of segregation are calculated using the Dissimilarity Index: school segregation, child residential segregation, and total residential segregation. School segregation is

measured based on the public primary school population reported in the NCES data, child residential segregation is measured based on the 0-17 age population reported in the 2000 Census, and total residential segregation is measured based on the total population reported in the 2000 Census. Most comparisons in our analysis between school and residential segregation focus on comparisons between the public primary school population and the 0-17 age population.

Description of multiple regression analysis:

To estimate the association between school segregation and various factors of interest, we used ordinary least squares (OLS) regression. Separate regression models were estimated for each of the three racial/ethnic groups. The variables, and their definitions, included in the models are listed below.

- Child residential segregation DI for racial/ethnic group of interest.
- Separate dummy variables for MSAs in the Midwest, Northeast, and West (MSAs in the South are used as the comparison group). See below for the definition of each region.
- Total population in the MSA as reported in the 2000 Census, natural log.
- 1998 per capita income (adjusted to 2000 dollars) for the MSA, natural log.
- New housing permits issued from 1990 to 2000 in the MSA, as a proportion of the MSA's total population in the 2000 Census.
- Percent of the total population residing in military bases within each MSA.
- Average school enrollment for each MSA.
- Percent of public primary school enrollment in each MSA's largest school district.
- Percent of the public primary school student population that is of the racial/ethnic group of interest.

The models are based on 326 MSAs, and not 329, because of difficulties compiling new housing permit information for three of the new MSAs announced between 1993 and 1999 (Corvallis, OR, Jonesboro, AR, and Missoula, MT).

Definition of Regions:

MSAs were assigned to one of four regions based on the state in which the MSA's largest school district is located. The state-by-state definition of regions is as follows:

- Midwest – Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin;
- Northeast – Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont;
- South – Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia;
- West – Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

Appendix B: Additional Tables

Table 3: School and Residential Segregation Summary Statistics

Segregation Type	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum
African American				
Primary School Segregation	66.8	70.0	20.3	89.1
Child Residential Segregation	67.8	69.5	18.6	86.2
Total Residential Segregation	64.6	64.9	19.4	84.9
Asian/Pacific Islander				
Primary School Segregation	47.7	48.4	20.2	93.8
Child Residential Segregation	44.5	45.3	16.0	60.3
Total Residential Segregation	41.7	41.4	13.3	59.0
Hispanic				
Primary School Segregation	59.0	59.7	18.9	81.3
Child Residential Segregation	54.3	55.7	11.7	77.9
Total Residential Segregation	50.9	50.7	11.2	75.4

Note: table reports dissimilarity-index statistics for 329 MSAs. Reported means and medians are weighted by the size of the racial group population.

TABLE 4: SEGREGATION IN THE 25 MOST POPULOUS METROPOLITAN AREAS

Region/Metropolitan Area	Primary School Enrollment	African American Segregation		Asian/Pacific Islander Segregation		Hispanic Segregation	
		School	Resid.	School	Resid.	School	Resid.
Midwest							
Chicago, IL	764,451	84.5	83.3	49.9	45.2	71.9	66.5
Detroit, MI	385,719	89.1	86.2	52.3	46.7	59.3	47.6
Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN-WI	242,118	71.3	63.9	62.5	51.4	54.3	49.9
Cleveland-Lorain-Elyria, OH	161,817	81.0	78.8	45.6	37.2	74.4	60.4
Northeast							
New York, NY	652,765	81.4	85.7	57.1	56.8	72.7	72.9
Philadelphia, PA-NJ	370,179	74.1	75.5	50.7	44.5	72.4	64.7
Boston, MA-NH	231,042	69.1	72.4	53.8	47.2	71.3	66.8
Nassau-Suffolk, NY	223,402	70.8	76.6	41.1	36.7	54.9	49.8
Pittsburgh, PA	161,942	71.7	71.2	50.9	44.1	51.1	32.1
South							
Washington, DC-MD-VA-WV	392,784	67.6	65.7	44.6	42.2	60.1	53.7
Houston, TX	388,384	70.8	69.9	54.4	51.1	65.0	61.2
Atlanta, GA	350,526	70.4	69.5	53.5	47.1	60.7	55.4
Dallas, TX	313,237	63.2	62.4	50.2	47.7	62.3	59.8
St. Louis, MO-IL	209,443	70.0	76.3	53.3	40.4	44.1	30.0
Baltimore, MD	202,082	74.0	71.1	44.7	39.8	43.8	38.8
Tampa-St. Petersburg, FL	163,487	44.6	65.0	37.6	32.3	47.9	43.9
Miami, FL	177,451	73.1	77.4	34.1	32.9	48.1	29.8
West							
Los Angeles-Long Beach, CA	854,343	67.3	70.0	53.8	51.7	69.7	67.0
Riverside-San Bernardino, CA	343,294	47.3	46.3	37.5	34.6	44.2	43.9
Phoenix-Mesa, AZ	301,565	50.9	46.5	29.2	26.1	58.7	55.1
Orange County, CA	254,397	43.3	40.5	43.5	41.4	66.7	60.8
San Diego, CA	244,877	58.3	57.6	51.5	48.7	54.1	56.0
Seattle-Bellevue-Everett, WA	178,941	54.2	52.4	37.7	36.2	37.8	34.5
Oakland, CA	184,585	70.0	68.1	48.4	46.1	56.5	52.4
Denver, CO	176,188	68.6	65.8	35.5	29.8	59.5	55.0

Note: most populous metropolitan areas selected and sorted based on their total population in the Census 2000 Redistricting Data. Reported segregation numbers are dissimilarity-index scores for each segregation type. Residential segregation refers to child residential segregation (0-17 years of age).

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Title: Relationship Between School and Residential Segregation at the Turn of the Century

Author(s): Jordan Rickles and Paul M. Ong

Corporate Source: Ralph and Goldy Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies, UCLA

Publication Date: June 11, 2001

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